

American Medical Certification Association (AMCA) Phlebotomy Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 – 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

Questions

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1. Which antiseptic is typically used for performing a heel stick on an infant?
 - A. Benzalkonium Chloride
 - B. Hydrogen Peroxide
 - C. Isopropyl Alcohol
 - D. Chlorhexidine

2. What does activating a safety device on the needle prevent?
 - A. Accidental needle sticks
 - B. Blood contamination
 - C. Patient anxiety
 - D. Infection spread

3. Which condition is indicated by a patient starting to sweat, appearing pale, and complaining of blurred vision?
 - A. Hypoglycemia
 - B. Vasovagal Syncope (fainting)
 - C. Dehydration
 - D. Shock

4. Which of the following is a crucial step before performing venipuncture?
 - A. Disinfect the work surface
 - B. Verify the patient's identity
 - C. Prepare the blood collection tubes
 - D. Wear a face mask

5. What factors can affect the accuracy of blood glucose levels?
 - A. Environmental temperature
 - B. Medication, food intake, and timing of the test
 - C. Blood type
 - D. Patient's age

6. What collection requires aseptic sterile techniques?
- A. Glucose testing
 - B. Blood Culture Collection
 - C. Complete Blood Count
 - D. PT/PTT testing
7. Which test requires a gold or red-top tube?
- A. Hematological tests
 - B. Serum tests (e.g., CMP, BMP)
 - C. Blood gas tests
 - D. Coagulation tests
8. Which type of specimen requires a chain of custody form?
- A. Routine blood specimens
 - B. Drug testing specimens
 - C. Serum specimens
 - D. Plasma specimens
9. What color tube is used for coagulation testing?
- A. Red Top
 - B. Light Blue Top
 - C. Green Top
 - D. Yellow Top
10. What should be done with samples if a delay in processing occurs due to laboratory backups?
- A. Store at room temperature
 - B. Send samples immediately
 - C. Refrigerate until processed
 - D. Dispose of all samples

Answers

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1. C
2. A
3. B
4. B
5. B
6. B
7. B
8. B
9. B
10. C

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Explanations

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1. Which antiseptic is typically used for performing a heel stick on an infant?

- A. Benzalkonium Chloride
- B. Hydrogen Peroxide
- C. Isopropyl Alcohol
- D. Chlorhexidine

When performing a heel stick on an infant, isopropyl alcohol is commonly used as an antiseptic. This is because isopropyl alcohol is effective in reducing the number of microorganisms on the skin surface immediately prior to the puncture, helping to minimize the risk of infection. Isopropyl alcohol is generally preferred in pediatric settings due to its rapid action and the fact that it evaporates quickly, ensuring that it does not contribute to significant discomfort during the procedure. Additionally, the concentration of isopropyl alcohol commonly used (70% solution) is effective in antimicrobial action while being safe for delicate infant skin. Other antiseptics listed may not be as suitable. Benzalkonium chloride, while used in some antiseptic products, is less effective for skin preparation in blood collection. Hydrogen peroxide can cause skin irritation and is not generally recommended for routine antiseptics in this context. Chlorhexidine is a powerful antiseptic but is typically avoided in neonates due to the potential for absorption and toxicity. Thus, isopropyl alcohol is the most appropriate choice for performing a heel stick on an infant, ensuring effective antiseptics while prioritizing the infant's safety and comfort.

2. What does activating a safety device on the needle prevent?

- A. Accidental needle sticks
- B. Blood contamination
- C. Patient anxiety
- D. Infection spread

Activating a safety device on the needle is primarily designed to prevent accidental needle sticks. This is an important safety measure for healthcare workers, as needle stick injuries can lead to serious health risks, including the transmission of bloodborne pathogens such as HIV and Hepatitis B and C. The safety device typically retracts or covers the needle after use, minimizing the risk of re-injury and safeguarding both the healthcare professional and their patients. While other options may relate to the broader context of safe phlebotomy practices—such as reducing contamination or infection risks—the specific function of a safety device on a needle is to enhance safety by preventing accidental injuries during or after the procedure.

3. Which condition is indicated by a patient starting to sweat, appearing pale, and complaining of blurred vision?

- A. Hypoglycemia
- B. Vasovagal Syncope (fainting)
- C. Dehydration
- D. Shock

The condition indicated by a patient who begins to sweat, appears pale, and complains of blurred vision is vasovagal syncope, commonly known as fainting. This response is a reaction of the autonomic nervous system, which leads to a sudden drop in heart rate and blood pressure, often triggered by stress, pain, or standing for long periods. In this state, decreased blood flow to the brain can cause symptoms like sweating, pallor, and visual disturbances like blurred vision, as the brain momentarily does not receive enough oxygenated blood. The combination of these symptoms serves as warning signs that the body is on the verge of fainting. Recognizing these signs is crucial in a clinical context, as individuals who experience vasovagal syncope may require immediate assistance to prevent injuries from falling or losing consciousness. In contrast, conditions like hypoglycemia or shock may present with similar symptoms but are accompanied by different underlying pathophysiological mechanisms that would typically involve additional clues such as altered mental status or more severe indications of cardiovascular compromise.

4. Which of the following is a crucial step before performing venipuncture?

- A. Disinfect the work surface
- B. Verify the patient's identity
- C. Prepare the blood collection tubes
- D. Wear a face mask

Verifying the patient's identity is an essential step before performing venipuncture because it ensures patient safety and accuracy in the collection process. This step helps to confirm that the correct patient is receiving the appropriate treatment or testing, which is critical in preventing errors that could lead to misdiagnosis or inappropriate treatment. Proper identification typically involves checking the patient's identification bracelet or asking the patient to state their name and date of birth. This practice aligns with the standards of patient care and laboratory procedures, emphasizing the importance of matching the patient with their medical records before any invasive procedure. While disinfecting the work surface, preparing blood collection tubes, and wearing personal protective equipment like a face mask are important in the phlebotomy process, verifying the patient's identity takes precedence to ensure that the procedures and tests performed are reliable and accurate.

5. What factors can affect the accuracy of blood glucose levels?

- A. Environmental temperature
- B. Medication, food intake, and timing of the test
- C. Blood type
- D. Patient's age

The accuracy of blood glucose levels can be significantly influenced by medication, food intake, and the timing of the test. When assessing glucose levels, it is essential to consider recent food consumption because carbohydrates can dramatically elevate blood glucose levels shortly after ingestion. Additionally, various medications, such as corticosteroids or insulin, can either raise or lower glucose levels depending on their action. The timing of the test is also critical; for example, fasting blood glucose measurements taken after a period of no food intake will yield different results than those taken after eating. In contrast, while environmental temperature, blood type, and a patient's age can have some influence on other physiological measurements, they are not primary factors that directly affect blood glucose accuracy. Environmental temperature might affect blood sample integrity, but it does not impact the biochemical results in a significant manner like medication and food intake do. Blood type does not influence glucose measurements, and while age can affect metabolism and overall health, it is less impactful on immediate glucose level readings compared to the other factors mentioned. Therefore, understanding the impact of medications, food, and timing is crucial for accurate blood glucose monitoring.

6. What collection requires aseptic sterile techniques?

- A. Glucose testing
- B. Blood Culture Collection
- C. Complete Blood Count
- D. PT/PTT testing

Blood culture collection requires aseptic sterile techniques because the primary goal is to detect the presence of microorganisms in the blood, which can indicate an infection. To ensure accurate test results and avoid contamination from skin flora or environmental bacteria, strict aseptic techniques must be employed. This includes using appropriate skin antiseptics such as iodine or chlorhexidine to cleanse the venipuncture site effectively, utilizing sterile equipment for the collection process, and following protocols that minimize exposure to contaminants during and after blood collection. By maintaining a sterile environment, the integrity of the samples is preserved, allowing for a precise diagnosis of potential bloodstream infections, which is critical for patient management and treatment. In contrast, other tests, such as glucose testing or complete blood count, do not have the same stringent requirements for sterility since they are not specifically looking for pathogens, but rather for blood constituents that are typically present without regard to contamination from microorganisms. Therefore, the need for aseptic techniques in blood culture collection is paramount in achieving reliable and valid results.

7. Which test requires a gold or red-top tube?

- A. Hematological tests
- B. Serum tests (e.g., CMP, BMP)
- C. Blood gas tests
- D. Coagulation tests

When collecting blood for serum tests such as Comprehensive Metabolic Panel (CMP) or Basic Metabolic Panel (BMP), a gold or red-top tube is used because these tubes contain additives that facilitate the clotting process. The gold-top tubes often have a gel separator that allows for the easy separation of serum from the clotted blood after centrifugation, which is essential for accurate serum test results. In contrast, hematological tests typically require lavender or purple-top tubes containing EDTA for anticoagulation purposes, meaning they must prevent blood from clotting. Blood gas tests often utilize green-top tubes with sodium heparin as an anticoagulant, and coagulation tests necessitate blue-top tubes that contain sodium citrate to help preserve samples for analysis. Thus, serum tests specifically utilize the gold or red-top tubes due to their property of providing a clear serum sample for evaluating various chemical components in the blood.

8. Which type of specimen requires a chain of custody form?

- A. Routine blood specimens
- B. Drug testing specimens
- C. Serum specimens
- D. Plasma specimens

The requirement of a chain of custody form is critically important for drug testing specimens. This process ensures the integrity of the specimen from the point of collection to the time it is analyzed in a laboratory. A chain of custody form documents every person who handles the specimen, the date and time of collection, and the purpose of the collection, providing a clear and traceable path for the specimen. This is essential in legal and workplace drug testing scenarios to prevent tampering or contamination and to maintain the validity of the results. In contrast, routine blood specimens, serum specimens, and plasma specimens, while they are still subject to certain handling protocols, do not necessitate a chain of custody because they are typically collected for diagnostic purposes rather than for legal reasons. This distinction is what makes the drug testing specimens the specific choice that requires a chain of custody.

9. What color tube is used for coagulation testing?

- A. Red Top
- B. Light Blue Top
- C. Green Top
- D. Yellow Top

The light blue top tube is specifically designed for coagulation testing, as it contains sodium citrate, an anticoagulant that helps preserve the integrity of clotting factors in the blood sample. This is essential for accurate coagulation studies, which require the blood to remain in a liquid state without clotting. Sodium citrate works by binding to calcium ions in the blood, which are necessary for the clotting process. By preventing clot formation, the light blue top tube ensures that laboratory tests such as Prothrombin Time (PT) and Activated Partial Thromboplastin Time (aPTT) can be performed with precise results. Other tubes, such as the red top, green top, or yellow top, are not suitable for coagulation testing due to their different additives or lack of anticoagulants. These tubes may be used for other types of tests, but they do not maintain the necessary conditions for reliable coagulation assessment.

10. What should be done with samples if a delay in processing occurs due to laboratory backups?

- A. Store at room temperature
- B. Send samples immediately
- C. Refrigerate until processed
- D. Dispose of all samples

The best course of action when faced with a delay in processing samples due to laboratory backups is to refrigerate the samples until they can be processed. Refrigeration helps to preserve the integrity of the samples, slowing down any potential degradation or alteration that might occur if they were left at room temperature. For many types of specimens, particularly blood and other bodily fluids, proper temperature control is important to maintain viability and ensure accurate test results. Sending samples immediately when processing cannot be completed effectively does not account for the potential degradation during transport, especially if the samples require specific conditions that cannot be maintained outside the laboratory. Room temperature storage might also compromise the quality of the samples. Disposing of all samples is not a viable solution since it eliminates the possibility of obtaining crucial diagnostic information. Therefore, refrigerating samples is the correct action to take in order to ensure they remain viable for accurate testing later on.

Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

<https://phlebotomy-amca.examzify.com>

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!

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